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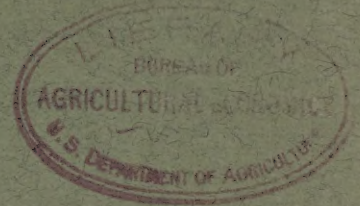
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OBSERVANCE  
OF  
RURAL LIFE SUNDAY  
BY 4-H CLUBS

1941



FAMILY LIFE AND DEMOCRACY

We will strive for individual improvement and for social betterment. We will devote our talents to the enrichment of our homes and our communities in relation to their material, social, and spiritual needs. We will endeavor to transmit this Nation to posterity not merely as we found it, but freer, happier, and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.

-- From 4-H Citizenship Pledge.

EXTENSION SERVICE

United States Department of Agriculture and State Agricultural Colleges  
Cooperating



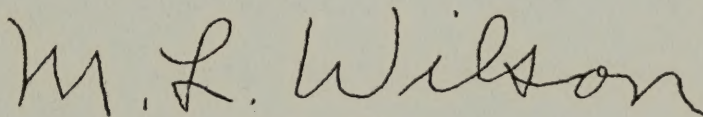




## Foreword

Individuals and nations are made strong and invincible through their beliefs and ideals, and the institutions they cherish. In this year of national crisis, therefore, it seems particularly appropriate to encourage the 4-H Clubs in response to a request by many outstanding national leaders, to unite in the observance of Rural Life Sunday. The suggested theme of the program for its observance is "The Family and Democracy." This program seeks to develop a strong family unity and alert citizenry through cooperation in various activities that aid in the development of a happy, satisfying home and community life.

At no previous time has it been so apparent as now that it will be the spiritual strength of our people that will determine the destiny of this Nation, which to date has experienced the greatest development of any country in history and within the amazingly short period of 300 years. Much of this spiritual strength will be attained through home and community activities that provide those essentials most conducive to the moral and spiritual development of each member of the family. Therefore, it seems very fitting in the observance of Rural Life Sunday that the attention of 4-H Club members be focused on those practical things that each can do in becoming a good citizen and a defender of the home life of this Nation.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "M. L. Wilson". The letters are fluid and connected, with a prominent loop at the end of the last name.

M. L. Wilson,  
Director of Extension Work.





THE SPIRITUAL INFLUENCE IN THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE

REMINDERS TO 4-H CLUB MEMBERS IN THE  
OBSERVANCE OF RURAL LIFE SUNDAY

The first act of the Pilgrim Fathers after landing on Plymouth Rock in 1620 was thanksgiving and prayer.

Tablets mark the pews rented and occupied by George Washington in churches in Virginia and New York.

"In God We Trust" is engraved on the coins of this Nation.

The national Congress and the State legislatures open their sessions with prayer.

"The official documents of American history . . . affirm and reaffirm that this is a religious Nation."

-- United States Supreme Court decision.

"The churches are the greatest influence in this world of ours to overcome the present tendency toward greed."

-- President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"A churchless community, a community where men have abandoned and scoffed at or ignored their religious needs, is a community on rapid downgrade."

-- Former President Theodore Roosevelt.

"The older I grow, the more certain I am that morality is dependent upon the spread of religious conviction in the government and civilization of this country."

-- Former President William Howard Taft.

"Our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually."

-- Former President Woodrow Wilson.

"The strength of a country is the strength of its religious convictions."

-- Former President Calvin Coolidge.

"Our churches and religious institutions are indispensable stabilizing factors in our civilization."

-- Former President Herbert Hoover.



GENERAL SUGGESTIONS IN RELATION TO THE OBSERVANCE  
OF 4-H CLUB SUNDAY\*

The 4-H Clubs in many States are now setting aside one Sunday in the year, when as many as possible of its members plan to attend some church of their own choosing. Religion is a factor in every community and one of the cornerstones of our civilization, and the observance of this day should cause 4-H members to feel that they are taking part in an old, universally recognized custom.

Rural Life Sunday occurs the fifth Sunday after Easter. Therefore, this year Rural Life Sunday will be observed on May 18. However, it may prove more satisfactory for the 4-H Clubs of a community to observe Rural Life Sunday or 4-H Club Sunday as it is often called, on some other Sunday in either May or June.

In the observance of 4-H Club Sunday, the church service may be arranged and conducted for 4-H members, yet with the aim of benefiting all who attend. The suggested theme for 1941 is "The Family Life and Democracy" which seems particularly appropriate inasmuch as it is commonly recognized that training in the democratic way of life originates in the home.

Members are usually encouraged to take an active part in the service by singing, repeating the club pledge, giving special club objectives, serving as ushers, decorating the church or hall where the services are held, or doing other things appropriate on such an occasion in keeping with the traditions of the church attended. This may be the beginning of some members becoming active church workers, and perhaps church leaders.

Many things that are a part of the 4-H Club program may be used in these services to show the close connection between the practical and the spiritual phases of life. A brief talk may be given regarding what the 4-H Clubs of the community are doing in connection with the 4-H Seven-Point Program for National Defense. Emphasis may be placed on those practical ways in which the 4-H Club members are contributing to their homes and to their home communities that make for the physical and spiritual strength of this Nation. Such a talk may be climaxed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag or by the 4-H citizenship ceremonial. However, whatever the program, the 4-H Sunday Service should emphasize the spiritual values and character-building qualities of 4-H Club work and afford club members an opportunity to identify themselves with those people of the community who stand for its best interests.

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\* Adapted from the "4-H Club Sunday Announcement" by R. H. Emberson, Assistant State Club Leader, Missouri.



THOUGHTS FOR THE BUILDING OF CITIZENSHIP  
THROUGH  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY UNITY

For the revitalizing of citizenship and the development of family unity, in the general observance of Rural Life Sunday, the theme proposed for this year is "Family Life and Democracy." For example, there is a definite place for home beautification in the revitalizing of citizenship and the development of family unity. The family is the basis of society. Patriotism is based on the affections; its natural nursing ground is the home. If we love and appreciate our homes we will love the country which makes their protection its first care. Such love of country provides the spiritual basis for which we are now striving. The efficiency of equipment and fortresses in the long run is dependent on the devotion of the population to the ideals which the country represents. In the development of ideal family life a few simple things are necessary. One of these is some home objective conducive to comfort in the creating of which members of the family share. We appreciate what we produce. Exhortation to true family spirit, or abstract appeals have little effect on most people. There must be some project which calls for definite action out of which value is derived. Beautification of the home need not be expensive. The improvement may cost only a few dollars, but it may help to create a priceless home feeling and a family unity that will inspire its members to contribute their best in service to others.

-- J. R. Hargreaves.

For the enjoyment of a united family life there is necessary the appreciation of the home as a life center. This attainment has a material as well as a spiritual basis. There must be something in the home surroundings which relieves monotony of toil, and in the providing and maintaining of which all the family has a part. Like many other great essentials this is within easy reach. In the most humble homes, of country or city, orderliness and such soothing and stimulating influences of beauty as can be derived from rooms furnished and decorated by the family with a few flowers in garden or window box are blessings which almost any family, consciously or unconsciously hungering for a little beauty, can reach. In the simple effort of producing these, family unity may be developed, in that family irritations are prevented or overcome, and new financial successes may often be obtained. In this way, beautification of the home may have economic as well as aesthetic and spiritual values.

-- M. L. Wilson.



Family life is the most meaningful of all our experiences. Life in the home with father, mother, brother, and sisters provides the richest, most satisfying human relationships. Here we turn for comfort, understanding, affection, and serenity. Through everyday living together we achieve our emotional balance and develop those attitudes that make all living joyous and fruitful. By planning, working, and sharing together we learn to face life, to mobilize our resources for solving its problems, conquering its difficulties, and enjoying its beauty; and we learn how to live and work together. Every one of us can increase and help to safeguard the happiness of this living together.

-- Lydia Ann Lynde.

A country home, be it ever so plain, with a father and a mother of sense and gentle culture, is nature's university, and is more richly endowed for the training of youth than Harvard or Yale.

It is also realized that the great force that readjusts the world originates in the home. Home conditions will ultimately mold the mind of man.

The home eventually controls the viewpoint of man; and you may do all you are a mind to in schools, but unless you reach in and get hold of that home and change its conditions you are nullifying the uplift of the schools. We are reaching for the home.

The farm must be made a place of beauty, so attractive that every passing stranger inquires: "Who lives in that lovely home?"

-- Seaman A. Knapp.

There is a physical and a spiritual side in homemaking. Both are necessary, and the spiritual is often greatly influenced by the physical. For example, there is the table, around which on practically all the farms of America, and in the homes of most small-town merchants, the whole family meets three times a day. That is the place where much of the character building of young people takes place. We attach great importance to the abundant, well-prepared table. It is probably as significant in the development of character as is the school or church. The meeting at the table is a social event in the family. It is there that father and mother comment on the behavior of the neighbors, of other young people, there that they express themselves on current topics, the church, religion, politics, character, education, prohibition; there three times daily the young people drink in through the years ideas of right and wrong, the place of honesty and integrity in life; there they are inspired to high ideals and with ambition to be someone and something in the world. It is the well-prepared table that leads



to pleasant memories and a feeling of peace with the world. The ill-prepared table leads to complaint, to dissatisfaction, to quarreling. It takes wonderful parents to train young people in the ways of righteousness handicapped by a poorly prepared table. We are inclined to think that the very great importance of the well-prepared table in such training is all too little understood by parents. There at the table, all unrecorded except in the minds and hearts of those present, the family expresses itself and says what comes from the heart. We believe in parents' systematically encouraging young people at meal-time to talk and tell of the day's happenings at school, on the playground, at the club meeting, each in their turn. We believe in the exchange about the table of stories heard during the day. It is an opportune time, too, to bring up topics for discussion and seek the opinions of the young people and mother and father. It is a wise father and mother who aim to teach the art of conversation and the art of intelligent listening. To be an entertaining conversationalist is one of the real accomplishments in life, and the place to learn is in the family, and the occasion in the family is the usual gathering about the table. It is there that the training in citizenship and the democratic way of life originates.

-- C. B. Smith.

The discriminating appreciation that one applies to a picture or a piece of sculpture may be equally applied to any fruit that grows on the commonest tree or bush in our field or to any animal that stands on a green pasture. It is no doubt a mark of a well-tempered mind that it can understand the significance of the forms in fruits and plants and animals and apply it in the work of the day.

The farmer is the agent or the representative of society to guard and subdue the surface of the earth; and he is the agent of the divinity that made it. He must exercise his dominion with due regard to all these obligations. He is a trustee. The productiveness of the earth must increase from generation to generation; this also is his obligation.

-- Liberty Hyde Bailey.

The farmer's position is administrative, being in a way a dispenser of the "Mysteries of God," for they are mysteries. Every apple is a mystery, and every potato is a mystery, and every ear of corn is a mystery, and every pound of butter is a mystery, and when a farmer is not able to understand these things he is out of place.

-- James Mickel Williams.



The home-centered farm, large or small, seldom fails to call for that directed energy which adds to efficiency. Some students of rural life state they never saw a home with a "temple area" where the family had failed, except through some unusual accident. The temple area will have appointments suggesting home sacredness. From this area pigs and chickens will be excluded. In the yard, front and back, there will be shrubs and an arrangement of flowers creating a color scheme which, according to scientific discovery, has definite invigorating value. The flowers may be just the old-fashioned petunias, moss roses, hollyhocks, and a few iris for the early season. God's rare gifts for His children are placed on the low shelves. In the home there will be neatness and that quiet order which men will not violate, but which will be reflected in the details of farm appointments and activities. The house may have been furnished at very little cost. Some of the furnishings, possibly the most treasured, may have been made by members of the family. But outside and inside this temple area will be the expression of a single family objective all leading to home appreciation and increased efficiency. Order and color schemes have a physiological effect as well as psychic. Such a half acre has become the mainspring of many a family success. It can be the most valuable plot on the farm. This temple area will increase in attractiveness as the years pass by. The aging shrubs, the persistent perennials, leave undying memories to the scattering children. Man's greatest protection is a fine memory of home.

-- J. R. Hargreaves.

We can attract our youth to the same kind of loyalty to our governmental pattern as we ourselves have had. The law of loyalty is simpler than the law of gravitation. It is this: We love not those who do most for us, but those for whom we do most. Not gratitude but sacrifice begets loyalty. When we treat our young people as craven and spineless and irresponsible, they will respond in kind, but when we demand and expect of them lives of free, energetic, and independent citizenship, they will not fail us but will go beyond our fondest wishes.

-- George Barton Cutten.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands; one Nation, indivisible; with liberty and justice for all.



THOUGHTS FOR THE BUILDING OF CITIZENSHIP  
THROUGH THE  
IMPROVEMENT OF THE HOME COMMUNITY

It is a condition of sound democracy that each individual farmer develop a new individual responsibility for himself and for his community that will parallel the new responsibility placed upon the Federal Government. Active participation by its members is essential to the health of the local community; it is no less vital to the health of private groups in which farmers participate on the basis of their occupation.

-- M. L. Wilson.

It is in our power to make of ourselves a great people and live great lives and live in the hearts of hundreds long after we are gone. We can, if we want to, build a rural community that will be noted throughout the State, and even the Nation, for its neighborliness, its hospitality, its abundant table, its sobriety, its thrift, its intellectuality, its kindliness, its cooperativeness, its fine social and recreational life, its high-mindedness, and its spirituality, a community where the sick are visited and the weary find comfort. These are the things that make life worth while. These things cost little money. They represent an attitude of mind and heart; and, these are the things the world has always found bring the most genuine satisfaction to the man, woman, or youth who pursues them.

-- C. B. Smith.

Every community should provide a beautiful setting for its homes. This requires united effort on the part of all its citizens. The roadside is really a part of each home. The protected wild flowers, as in Texas, and shapely shrubs may become in essence a part of a family park and be appreciated as such. The church, the school, and other public buildings should be examples of orderliness and beauty. And the whole community should be such that old and young unite in praising it and serving its best interests.

-- J. R. Hargreaves.

In 4-H Club work, we give training to the whole man -- not just to the intellect. The club member hears the word of instruction -- his intellect is appealed to, he reasons. He does the work with his hands, which gives him skill to accomplish. In learning to work constructively, creatively, he learns the first essentials of accomplishment and happiness. His eyes are trained to see the beauty of the



straight furrow, the perfect product of field and orchard and pen. He sees the things around him -- field and woods and sky. His judgment is trained through appraisement of product and selection of the better animal, the better way. His spirituality is developed through the need of kindness to herd and flock, of fair play with fellow members, honesty in the treatment of soil; as you sow and cultivate and prune, so shall you reap. His social side is developed through contact with fellow members, in work, demonstration, pageantry, song, and play. His citizenship is developed as he takes part in community program making and planning for the future. He deals with real situations rather than artificial situations.

-- C. B. Smith.

#### THE CHALLENGE

In the history of humanity, in times of great crisis, it has been the spiritual element that has carried the people through. In this country our democratic way of life gives expression to that spirit, and it is the only type of government that does. For this Nation was founded upon the Christian idea, and today the Democracy for which we stand, for which we are willing, if need be, to lay down our lives, is the embodiment of that Christian idea. Young people should be led to understand and appreciate, particularly through their own democratic procedures in relation to their 4-H activities, that this democratic way of life is a heritage to be defended. By doing so, they themselves will increase in spiritual stature; and, in turn, the United States of America will attain new heights as a country of peace and good will with opportunity for all -- ever vigilant in maintaining a force effective enough to defend its way of life at all costs. The challenge is plain.

-- M. L. Wilson.



### The National 4-H Club Pledge

I Pledge      My Head to clearer thinking,  
                 My Heart to greater loyalty,  
                 My Hands to larger service,  
                 My Health to better living, for  
                 My Club, my Community, and my Country.

### 4-H Seven-Point Program for National Defense

1. Interpretation of the National Defense Program to the community.
2. Production of food, clothing, and home equipment for better family living.
3. Conservation of human and natural resources on the home farm and in the local community.
4. Development of the health of the individual and the community.
5. Acquirement of useful technical and mechanical skills.
6. Practice in and appreciation of democratic procedures basic to a democratic way of life.
7. Development of an understanding of the social and economic forces at work, particularly in the Western Hemisphere, and steps to take.



The American's Creed\*

I believe in the United States of America as a Government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes.

I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag, and to defend it against all enemies.

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\* The American's Creed was written by William Tyler Page, Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, in 1917. It was adopted and promoted by the Government's Committee on Publication, and was accepted by the House of Representatives on behalf of the American People on April 3, 1918. Since then its message has been an inspiration to the American Nation; and its spirit of faith will carry it through the centuries as one of the finest expressions of patriotism.



#### 4-H Citizenship Fledge\*

We, individually and collectively, pledge our efforts from day to day, to fight for the ideals of this Nation.

We will never allow tyranny and injustice to become enthroned in this, our country, through indifference to our duties as citizens.

We will strive for intellectual honesty and exercise it through our power of franchise. We will obey the laws of our land and endeavor increasingly to quicken the sense of public duty among our fellow men.

We will strive for individual improvement and for social betterment. We will devote our talents to the enrichment of our homes and our communities in relation to their material, social, and spiritual needs.

We will endeavor to transmit this Nation to posterity not merely as we found it, but freer, happier, and more beautiful than it was transmitted to us.

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\* From the 4-H Citizenship Ceremonial.



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

1. The University of Chicago is a private, non-profit institution of higher learning, established in 1837.

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